

Draft Environmental Assessment

Sportsmans Bridge Fishing Access Site Enhancement

April 2006



***Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks***

**Sportsmans Bridge Fishing Access Site Enhancement
Draft Environmental Assessment
MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST**

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) proposes to enhance Sportsmans Bridge Fishing Access Site. Enhancement would include increasing the parking lot from 13 single vehicle undefined spaces to 25 vehicle/trailer and 8 single vehicle defined spaces.

1. Type of proposed action:

Development	_____
Renovation	_____X_____
Maintenance	_____
Land Acquisition	_____
Equipment Acquisition	_____
Other (describe)	_____

- 2. Agency authority for the proposed action:** The 1977 Montana Legislature enacted statute 87-1-605 MCA, which directs MFWP to acquire, develop, and operate a system of fishing access sites (FAS). The legislature established a funding account to ensure that this function would be accomplished. Sections 12-8-213, 23-1-105, 23-1-106, 15-1-122, 61-3-321, and 87-1-303, MCA, authorize the collection fees and charges for the use of state park system units and fishing access sites, and contain rule-making authority for their use, occupancy, and protection. The opportunity for public involvement regarding the proposed project is provided under MCA 23-1-110. Section 23-2-101, MCA, allows MFWP to plan and develop outdoor recreational resources in the state, and receive and expend funds, including federal funds.

The Boat Fee in Lieu of Tax revenue includes 20% of all fees in lieu of tax collected by the county treasurer. It is used by MFWP to improve regional boating facilities under the control of MFWP (Section 23-2-518, MCA).

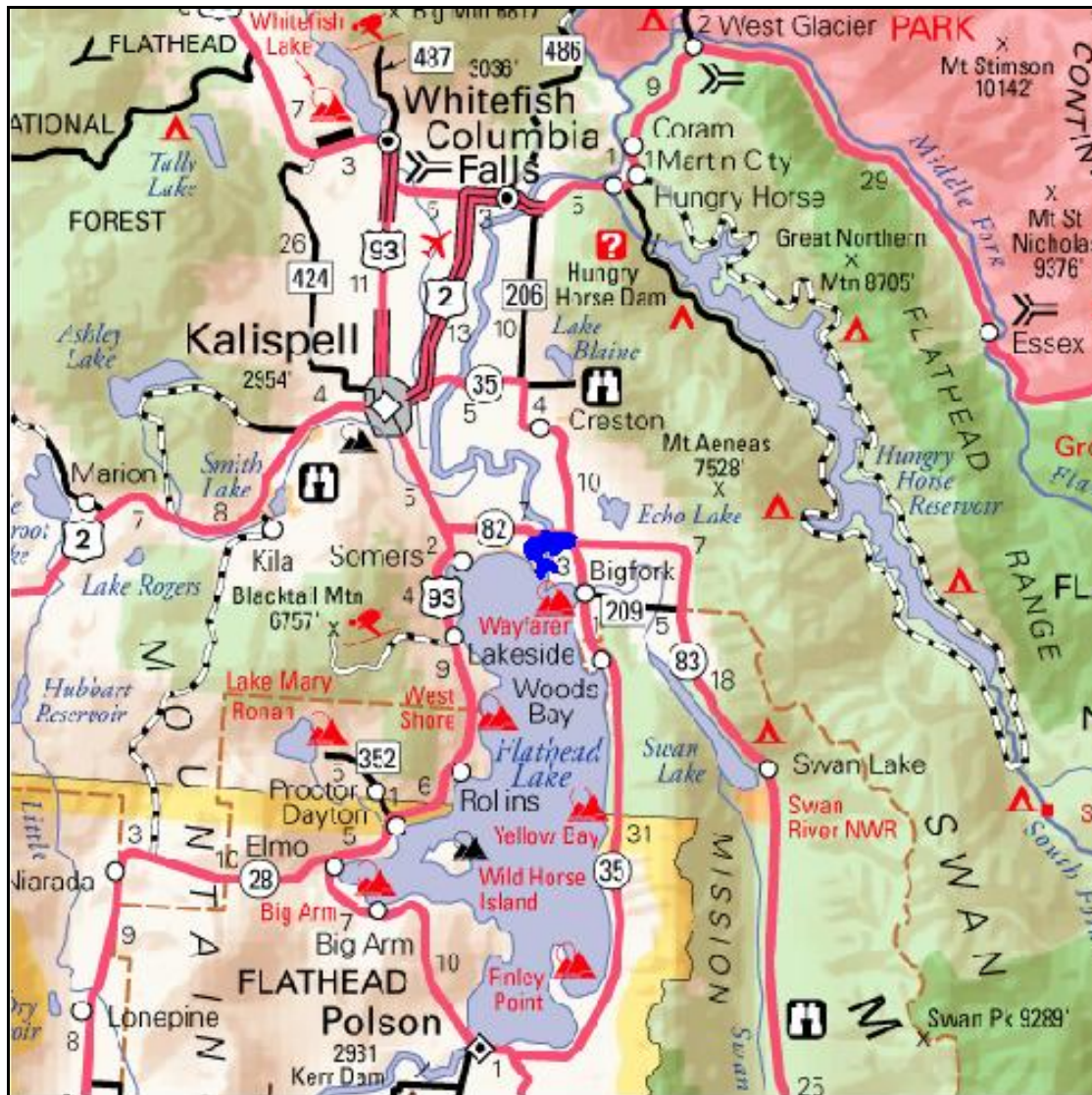
2. Name of project:

Sportsmans Bridge Fishing Access Site Enhancement

3. Name, address, and phone number of project sponsor:

Marty Watkins
Regional Parks Manager
Montana FWP, Region 1
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
406-751-4573

4. **If applicable:**
Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: June 22, 2006 – October 31, 2006
Estimated Completion Date: Fall 2006
Current Status of Project Design (percentage complete): 80%
5. **Location affected by proposed action (county, range, and township):**
Sportsmans Bridge FAS is 12 miles southeast of Kalispell on Hwy 82. The site is located in Section 23, Township 27 North, Range 20 West, Flathead County, Montana. The site is 5.77 acres.

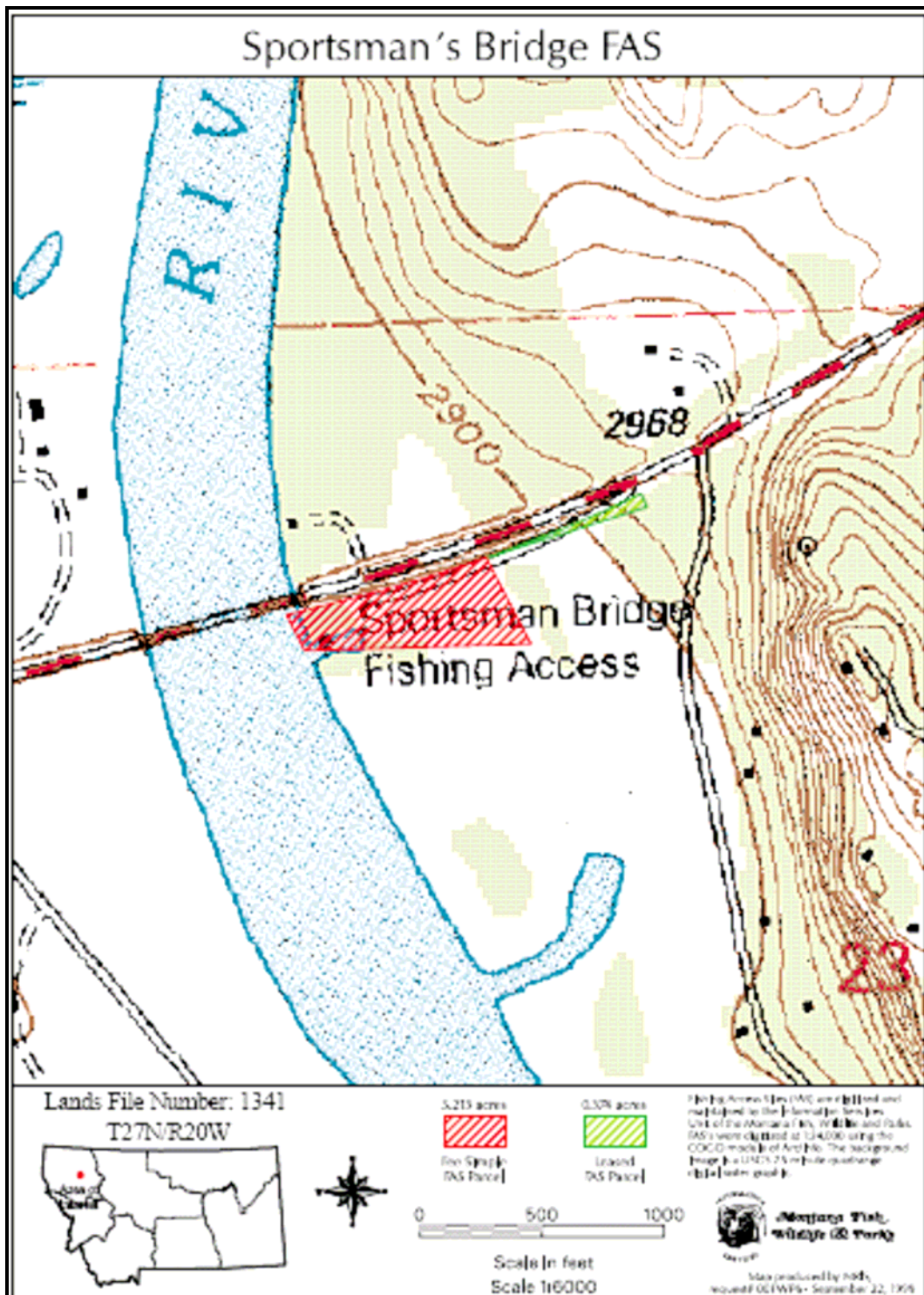


Blue Fish delineates location of Sportsmans Bridge FAS.

6. Project size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

- (a) Developed:
Residential 0 acres
Industrial 0 acres
- (b) Open Space/Woodlands/
Recreation..... 0.3 acres
- (c) Wetlands/Riparian
Areas..... 0 acres
- (d) Floodplain..... 0 acres
- (e) Productive:
irrigated cropland 0 acres
dry cropland 0 acres
forestry 0 acres
rangeland 0 acres
other 0 acres

7. **Map/site plan:** Attach an original 8½" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.



8. Listing of any other local, state, or federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction:

(a) Permits: Permits will be secured prior to project start.

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
MFWP Stream Bank Protection	124	
Montana Department of Environmental Quality	318	
Flathead County	Floodplain Permit	
Army Corps of Engineers	404	

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Boat Fee in Lieu of Tax Fund	\$25,000

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
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9. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action.

The proposed action is to enhance the Sportsmans Bridge FAS by increasing parking capacity from 13 undefined parking spaces to 25 vehicle/trailer and 8 single defined parking spaces. The parking spaces will be grouped (two, three, or four spaces per group; see Site Plan on page 8). Increasing and defining parking slots at the site will accommodate current usage and allow for enhanced protection of the natural resources.

The Sportsmans Bridge FAS has become a popular location during spring, summer, and fall for anglers and duck hunters due to the site's close proximity to Flathead Lake. In 2000, a deep-water concrete boat ramp was constructed at the site to increase accessibility to the river year-round. At the time, parking was not increased at the site to accommodate vehicle and trailer units. Annual site visitation increased by 25% between 2003 (9,376 visitors) and 2005 (11,788 visitors). Most



Picture 1: Site damage from backing trailer into parking stall.



Picture 2: Vehicles parked on grass due to overflow.

usage occurs between March and October. In 2005, average monthly usage was 1,220 visitors from March through October, and average monthly usage was 504 visitors the rest of the year. In the spring, lake trout are located in the mouth of the Flathead River, and Sportsmans Bridge FAS is the closest boat access to this location. In September and October, duck hunters use the site for access to Flathead Lake.

Current parking is undefined. Vehicles with trailers are often parked across several parking stalls in order to fit, which then eliminates the opportunities for others to park. Vehicles are often backed into stalls, with the trailers parked in the grass behind the parking slot, causing damage (Picture 1). When the parking lot is full, people often park on the grass (Picture 2), park in adjacent wetlands, and illegally park on the entrance road (Picture 3). The purpose of the proposed project is to accommodate current use by increasing the number of parking units and by extending current parking stalls to accommodate vehicle and trailer units. This will also provide site protection from off-road parking (Pictures 4 and 5).

HB495 Qualification

The proposed action is to increase parking capacity from 13 unmarked single parking spaces to 25 vehicle/trailer and 8 single defined parking spaces. Increasing and defining parking slots at the site will accommodate current usage and allow for enhanced protection of the resources.

The improvements to the parking lot meet requirements under HB495: “any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater.” Please see Appendix 1 for HB495 qualification checklist. The improvements to the parking lot meet requirements under HB495: “new parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more.”



Picture 3: Vehicle illegally parked on the access road.

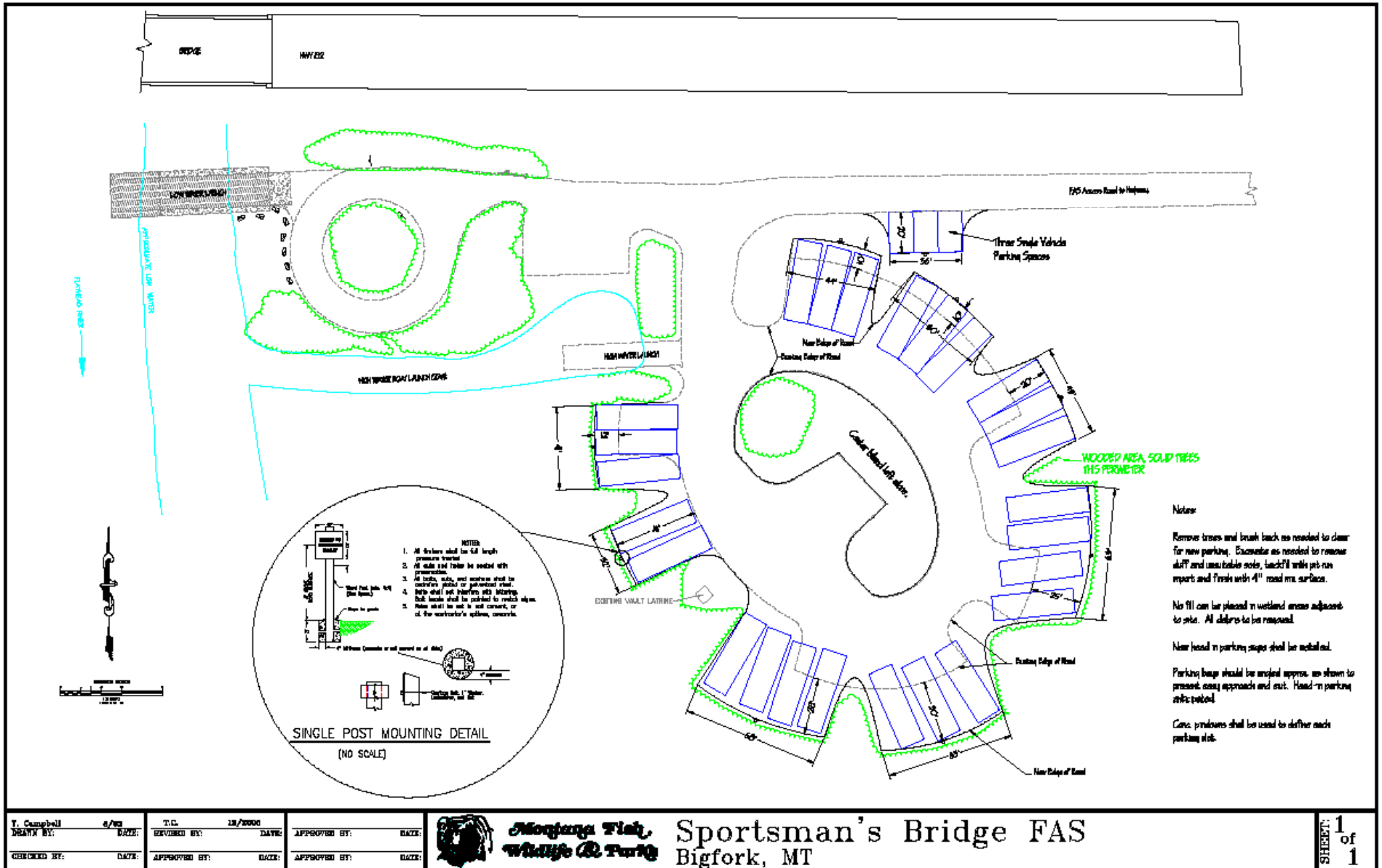


Picture 4: Site damage due to parking on grass.



Picture 5: Site damage due to parking on grass.

SITE PLAN



PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

- 1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no-action alternative) to the proposed action, whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider, and a comparison of the alternatives with the proposed action/preferred alternative:**

Alternative A: No Action

MFWP would not expand the parking lot to accommodate current usage. People would continue to park in the grass, in wetland areas, or illegally on the access road. Access to the site would continue to be limited by parking.

Alternative B: Enhance Sportsmans Bridge FAS

The proposed action is to enhance the Sportsmans Bridge FAS by increasing parking capacity from 13 unmarked single parking spaces to 25 vehicle/trailer and 8 single defined parking spaces. Increasing and defining parking slots at the site will accommodate current usage and allow for site protection.

- 2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

The project will minimally impact soil stability, erosion, and surface runoff. The expanded parking lot will be located in the 100-year flood plain area. Erosion is expected to be minor. Best Management Practices (BMP) will be utilized to minimize erosion and surface runoff during construction of the project.

The project will minimally impact the air at the FAS. Minor amounts of dust will be temporarily created during construction.

The project will minimally impact the water at the FAS. To help minimize changes in drainage pattern caused by construction, the parking lot expansion will be located on an area of low slope. In addition, the work will be done to BMP standards, which will divert all runoff from parking areas away from the river.

The project will minimally impact the vegetation at the FAS. Approximately 0.3 acres of vegetation will be removed to expand the parking lot. Currently there are minimal weed infestations at the site. To decrease the establishment and spread of weeds, the site will be monitored and weed control provided as necessary.

As this site is already receiving recreational use and construction is occurring in a previously disturbed area, the project will not alter, or will minimally alter, fish and wildlife (game and nongame) habitat, diversity, or abundance. The Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) located five species of concern and one bird rookery within one mile of Sportsmans Bridge FAS: lynx, grizzly bear, bald eagle, bull trout, flathead

pondsnail, and a great blue heron rookery. Lynx are not likely to occur at the site, as the elevation and habitat are not adequate for them. Grizzly bears do occur at the site. The project will not impact grizzly bears, as recreational use is already occurring at the site. Bald eagles do occur at the site. There are no known nests within 0.25 miles of the FAS. If a nest is located, MFWP will follow the Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan adopted in July of 1994. There should be minimal impacts on bald eagles with the expansion of the parking lot, as recreational use is already occurring at the site. There will be no impact on bull trout from the project. Flathead pondsnail have not been located at the FAS, and their known distribution is at the edge of the one-mile perimeter identified for species of concern near the FAS. The expansion of the parking lot should not impact the flathead pondsnail, as construction will be occurring in previously disturbed areas. The great blue heron rookery is located approximately 1 mile from the FAS. There will be no impact on the rookery due to this distance.

The project will minimally impact noise and will not impact electrical effects. An increase in existing noise levels would occur with increased traffic and number of people visiting the site. However, additional parking is being added to accommodate the usage that is already occurring; therefore, increased usage will likely be minimal. There will be a minor increase in noise during construction; however, this will be short term (and will not have a significant impact on visitors to the site or neighbors).

There will be no alteration of land use.

There will be a minimal increase in the risk to health hazards to the human environment. The MFWP Region 1 Noxious Weed Management Plan calls for an integrated method of managing weeds, including the use of herbicides. The use of herbicides would comply with application guidelines and be conducted by people trained in safe handling techniques. Weeds would also be controlled using mechanical or biological means in certain areas to reduce the risk of chemical spills or water contamination.

There will be a minor impact on the surrounding community. MFWP will follow the guidelines of the good neighbor policy for public recreation lands (MCA 23-1-126.) to have "no impact upon adjoining private and public lands by preventing impact on those adjoining lands from noxious weeds, trespass, litter, noise and light pollution, streambank erosion, and loss of privacy." There will be a decrease in traffic hazards at the site. Currently due to high usage, numerous vehicles are illegally parking on the access road. With the expansion of the existing parking lot, it is anticipated that sufficient off-road parking will be available.

There will be no alteration of public services, taxes, or utilities.

The quality and quantity of the recreation/tourism at this site would be improved through better public services, access, and user capacity. This should provide benefits for the users and the area's tourism economy.

There is a low likelihood that cultural and historical properties will be impacted.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

This analysis did not reveal any significant impacts to the human or physical environment. The proposed site has been used in the past as a public recreation area; this action would continue and improve that use.

PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 1. Describe the level of public involvement for this project, if any, and given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?**

The public will be notified in the following ways to comment on the EA of the Sportsmans Bridge FAS Enhancement:

1. Legal notices will be published in the *Daily Inter Lake*.
2. Legal notice and the draft EA will be posted on the Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks web page: <http://fwp.state.mt.us/publicnotices>.
3. An open house will be scheduled if there is sufficient public interest to merit it.

This level of public involvement is appropriate for a project of this size.

- 2. Duration of comment period, if any:**

The public comment period will be 37 days, from April 7 through May 15, 2006. Comments may be e-mailed to mawatkins@mt.gov, or written comments may be sent to the following address:

Marty Watkins
Regional Parks Manager
MFWP, Region 1
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 751-4573

PART V. EA PREPARATION

1. **Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?**

No

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

Based on an evaluation of impacts to the physical and human environment under MEPA, this environmental review revealed no significant negative impacts from the proposed action; therefore, an EIS is not necessary and an environmental assessment is the appropriate level of analysis.

2. **Name, title, address, and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:**

Marty Watkins
MFWP Regional Parks Manager
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 751-4573

Sally Schrank
Independent Contractor
112 Riverview C
Great Falls, MT 59404
(406) 268-0527

3. **List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Parks Division Region 1
Wildlife Division Region 1
Fisheries Division Region 1
Design and Construction Bureau

Montana Department of Commerce—Tourism
P.O. Box 200533
1424 9th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0533

Montana Natural Heritage Program—Natural Resources Information System
P.O. Box 201800
1515 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-1800

State Historic Preservation Office
Montana Historical Society
1410 8th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620

PART VI. MEPA CHECKLIST

Evaluation of the impacts of the proposed action, including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. LAND RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. **Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?			X			1a.
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X			1a.
c. **Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition, or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 1a. The proposed project will not alter geologic substructure and will minimally impact soil stability. The expanded parking lot will be located in the 100-year flood plain area. Erosion is expected to be minor. Best Management Practices will be utilized to minimize erosion and surface runoff during construction of the proposed project. The expansion of the parking lot meets requirements under HB495 (Appendix 1).

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

2. AIR Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))			X			2a.
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		NA				
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2a. Minor amounts of dust will be temporarily created during construction.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

3. <u>WATER</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X			3b.
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood water or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		NA				
m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		NA				
n. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 3b. To help minimize changes in drainage pattern caused by construction, the parking lot expansion will be located on an area of low slope. In addition, the work will be done to BMP standards, which will divert all runoff from parking areas away from the river.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X			4a.
b. Alteration of a plant community?			X			See 4a.
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				4c.
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X		X	4e.
f.***For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		NA				
g. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 4a. Approximately 0.3 acres of vegetation will be removed to expand the parking lot.
- 4c. The Montana Natural Heritage Program found no records of unique, rare, threatened, or endangered plant species within one mile of the proposed site (written communication dated January 30, 2006).
- 4e. Currently there are minimal weed infestations at the site. Development of an area often leads to the establishment and spread of noxious weeds. To decrease the establishment and spread of weeds, the site will be monitored and weed control provided as necessary.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

5. FISH/WILDLIFE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?			X			5a.
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?			X			See 5a.
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?			X			See 5a.
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?			X			5f.
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)		NA				
i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)		NA				
j. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 5a. As this site is already receiving recreational use and construction is occurring in a previously disturbed area, the proposed project will not alter, or will minimally alter, fish and wildlife (game and nongame) habitat, diversity, or abundance.
- 5f. The MNHP located five species of concern and one bird rookery within one mile of Sportsmans Bridge FAS: lynx *Lynx canadensis*, grizzly bear *Ursus arctos horribilis*, bald eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, bull trout *Salvelinus confluentus*, flathead pondsnail *Stagnicola elrodi*, and a great blue heron rookery.

Lynx are listed as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), listed as special status by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and listed as S3, G5 by the MNHP. This ranking by MNHP indicates lynx are potentially at risk of extirpation in Montana and common globally. Lynx are not likely to occur at the site, as the elevation and habitat are not adequate for them.

Grizzly bears are listed as threatened by USFWS and by USFS, listed as special status by the BLM, and listed as S3, G4 by the MNHP. This ranking by MNHP indicates grizzly bears are potentially at risk of extirpation in Montana and not rare globally. Grizzly bears do occur at the site. The proposed

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

project will not impact grizzly bears as recreational use is already occurring at the site.

Bald eagles are listed as threatened by the USFWS and by the USFS, listed as special status by the BLM, and listed as S3, G5 by the MNHP. This ranking by MNHP indicates bald eagles are potentially at risk of extirpation in Montana and common globally. Bald eagles do occur at the site. There are no known nests within 0.25 miles of the FAS. If a nest is located, MFWP will follow the Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan adopted in July of 1994. There should be minimal impacts on bald eagles with the expansion of the parking lot, as recreational use is already occurring at the site, and the proposed project will not affect food base or nesting territories.

Bull trout are listed as threatened by the USFWS and by the USFS, and listed as special status by the BLM. There will be no impact on bull trout from expanding the parking lot, as recreational use is already occurring at the site.

Flathead pondsnail are listed as S1, G1 by MNHP. This ranking by MNHP indicates flathead pondsnail are at high risk of extirpation both in Montana and globally. Flathead pondsnail have not been located at the FAS, and their known distribution is at the edge of the one-mile perimeter identified for species of concern near the FAS. The expansion of the parking lot should not impact the flathead pondsnail, as construction will be occurring in previously disturbed areas.

The great blue heron rookery is located approximately 1 mile from the FAS. There will be no impact on the rookery due to this distance.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			6a.
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 6a. An increase in existing noise levels would occur with increased traffic and number of people visiting the site. However, additional parking is being added to accommodate the usage that is already occurring; therefore, increased usage will likely be minimal. There will be a minor increase in noise during construction; however, this will be short term (and will not have a significant impact on visitors to the site or neighbors).

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

7. LAND USE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown ₃	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				7a.
b. Conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: _____		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

7a. There will be no alteration of land use with the proposed project.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?			X		Yes	8a.
b. Affecting an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d.***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		NA				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

8a. The MFWP Region 1 Noxious Weed Management Plan calls for an integrated method of managing weeds, including the use of herbicides. The use of herbicides would be in compliance with application guidelines and conducted by people trained in safe handling techniques. Weeds would also be controlled using mechanical or biological means in certain areas to reduce the risk of chemical spills or water contamination.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				9a.
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X			9e,
f. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 9a. MFWP will follow the guidelines of the good neighbor policy for public recreation lands (MCA 23-1-126.) to have “no impact upon adjoining private and public lands by preventing impact on those adjoining lands from noxious weeds, trespass, litter, noise and light pollution, streambank erosion, and loss of privacy.”
- 9e. There will be a decrease in traffic hazards at the site. Currently due to high usage, numerous vehicles are illegally parking on the access road. With the expansion of the existing parking lot, it is anticipated that sufficient off-road parking will be available.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify: _____		X				10a.
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources						10e.
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.						10f
g. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10a. There will be no alteration of public services, taxes, or utilities with the proposed project.

10e. No revenue will be directly collected by the operation of this proposed site. Day use at state fishing access sites is free.

10f. It costs approximately \$2,000 per year to maintain Sportsmans Bridge FAS. The proposed project will have a negligible impact on maintenance costs.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. **Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)			X			11c.
d. *** For P-R/D-J , will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		NA				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 11c. The quality and quantity of the recreation/tourism at this site would be improved through better public services, access, and user capacity. This should provide benefits for the users and the area's tourism economy. Please see Appendix 2 for Tourism Report

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u>	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure, or object of prehistoric, historic, or paleontological importance?		X				12a.
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. **** For P-R/D-J , will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a)		NA				.
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 12a. On February 23, 2004, the State Historic and Preservation Office (SHPO) conducted a cultural resource file search of the FAS. They concluded that there was a low likelihood that cultural properties would be impacted and that it was not necessary to perform a cultural resource inventory. (Please see Appendix 4, SHPO Consultation).

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources, which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				13a.
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		X				
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		NA				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

13a. This analysis did not reveal any significant impacts to the human or physical environment, singularly and cumulatively. The proposed site has been used in the past as a public recreation area; this action would continue and improve that use.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

*** Determine whether the described impact may result, and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

**** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

APPENDIX 1
HB495
PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

Date February 5, 2006 **Person Reviewing** Sally Schrank

Project Location: Sportsmans Bridge FAS is 12 miles southeast of Kalispell on Hwy 82. The site is located in section 23, Township 27 North, Range 20 West, Flathead County, Montana. The site is 5.77 acres.

Description of Proposed Work: The proposed action is to enhance the Sportmans Bridge FAS by increasing parking capacity from 13 unmarked single parking spaces to 25 vehicle/trailer and 8 single defined parking spaces. Increasing and defining parking slots at the site will accommodate current usage and allow for site protection.

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under HB 495 rules. (Please check _ all that apply and comment as necessary.)

☐ A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?

Comments:

☐ B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?

Comments:

☒ C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?

Comments: The expansion of the parking lot will cause excavation of 20 cubic yards or more.

☒ D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?

Comments: An expansion of the parking lot will increase parking from 13 unmarked spaces to 25 vehicle/trailer spaces and 8 single parking spaces (i.e., increase of 42%).

☐ E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a double wide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?

Comments:

☐ F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?

Comments:

☐ G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?

Comments:

☐ H. Any new above ground utility lines?

Comments:

- ☐ I. Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?

Comments:

- ☐ J. Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern; including effects of a series of individual projects?

Comments:

If any of the above are checked, HB 495 rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.

APPENDIX 2
TOURISM REPORT
MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA)/HB495

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by HB495 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions, and submit this form to:

Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator
Travel Montana-Department of Commerce
PO Box 200533
1424 9th Ave.
Helena, MT 59620-0533

Project Name: Sportsmans Bridge Fishing Access Site Improvements

Project Description: The proposed action is to enhance the Sportmans Bridge FAS by increasing parking capacity from 13 undefined parking spaces to 25 vehicle/trailer and 8 single defined parking spaces. The parking spaces will be grouped into two to four slots per group. At the front of each parking group a sign will be posted stating head-in parking only. Increasing and defining parking slots at the site will accommodate current usage and allow for site protection. Sportsmans Bridge FAS is 12 miles southeast of Kalispell on Hwy 82. The site is located in section 23, Township 27 North, Range 20 West, Flathead County, Montana. The site is 5.77 acres.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?

NO

YES

If YES, briefly describe:

As described, project appears to improve public services, access and capacity at the Sportsmans Bridge FAS. This should provide benefits for the users and the area's tourism economy.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?

NO

YES

If YES, briefly describe:

As described, the project appears to improve both the quality and quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities at this FAS through better public services, access and user capacity.

Signature Victor A. Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator, Travel Montana

Date February 16, 2006

APPENDIX 3 SHPO CONSULTATION



MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

225 North Roberts ♦ P.O. Box 201201 ♦ Helena, MT 59620-1201
♦ (406) 444-2694 ♦ FAX (406) 444-2696 ♦ www.montanahistoricalsociety.org ♦

AL TERRY
FILES? 209.2
403.3
462.1
870.3
1000.1

February 23, 2004

Bardell Mangum
FWP
1420 East Sixth Ave
PO Box 200701
Helena MT 59620-0701

RECEIVED

FEB 25 2004

DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION
DEPT. OF FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

RE: 7 BOAT RAMP EXTENSION PROJECTS, SHPO #2004022016

Dear Bardell:

I have conducted a cultural resource file searches for the above-cited project located in Section 31, T27N, R27W, Section 10, T26N, R27W, Section 23, T27N, R28W, Section 22 T36N, R26W, Section 26, T31N, R22W, Section 26, T31N, R22W, Section 23, T27N, R20W Section 15, T26N, and R19W. According to our records there have been a few previously recorded sites within the designated search locales. Site 24LN1540 is a historical dump and is located in the NE quadrant of Section 31, T27N, R27W. Site 24LN0758 is a historical bridge/railroad route and is located in the NE quadrant of Section 23, T27N, R28W. Site 24FH1021 is an archaeological site located in the SE quadrant of Section 26, T31N, R22W, also located in this section is 24FH0350 which is the Great Northern Railroad route. Site 24FH0517 a historic trail, and is located in the NW quadrant of Section 23, T27N, and R20W.

SPORTSMANS
BRIDGE FAS

We feel that there is a low likelihood this undertaking will impact cultural properties. We, therefore, feel that a recommendation for a cultural resource inventory is unwarranted at this time. However, should cultural materials be inadvertently discovered during this project we would ask that our office be contacted and the site investigated. Thank you for consulting with us.

If you have any further questions or comments you may contact me at (406) 444-7767 or by e-mail at dmurdo@state.mt.us.

Sincerely,

Damon Murdo
Cultural Records Manager

File: FWP/GENERAL/2004



STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE ♦ 1410 8th Ave ♦ P.O. Box 201202 ♦ Helena, MT 59620-1202
♦ (406) 444-7715 ♦ FAX (406) 444-6575